


Urgent Mission to Yarmouk by UNRWA Commissioner General, Pierre Krähenbühl

 unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/urgent-mission-yarmouk-unrwa-commissioner-general-pierre-krähenbühl

11 April 2015

Statement by UNRWA Spokesperson, Chris Gunness

UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl is undertaking an urgent mission to Syria today, 11 April 2015, in coordination with the Office of the UN Secretary-General.

The visit is prompted by UNRWA's deepening concerns for the safety and protection of some 18,000 Palestinian and Syrian civilians, including 3,500 children, as Yarmouk remains under the control of armed groups, and as civilian lives continue to be threatened by the effects of the armed conflict in the area.

The objectives of the Commissioner-General's visit are:

- **a.** to obtain a closer view of the evolving situation in Yarmouk and to learn from the experiences of individuals affected by the crisis;
- **b.** to consult with the Government of Syria on its perspectives, and to exchange views on peaceful approaches to addressing the humanitarian consequences of the situation in Yarmouk;
- **c.** to consult with the Deputy UN Special Envoy on approaches to non-state actors in order to secure humanitarian access to civilians.
- **d.** to consult with the Deputy Special Envoy and other UN colleagues on the UN's role with particular reference to feasible humanitarian action to support civilians in Yarmouk under all circumstances
- **e.** to recognize and give encouragement to UNRWA staff and colleagues from other UN Agencies in Syria.

To achieve these objectives, the Commissioner-General will meet with relevant senior Syrian officials, UN colleagues and UNRWA staff. He will also visit the displaced people presently accommodated in a government school building in Tadamoun.

Background Information:

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. As a result, the UNRWA programme budget, which supports the delivery of core essential services, operates with a large shortfall. UNRWA encourages all Member States to work collectively to exert all possible efforts to fully fund the Agency's programme budget. UNRWA emergency programmes and key projects, also operating with large shortfalls, are funded through

separate funding portals. UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5.4 million Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA across its five fields of operation. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance.